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CBC, CABLE COMPANIES FORM PARTNERSHIP  
TO APPLY FOR NEW, EXPANDED PARLIAMENTARY CHANNEL

OTTAWA -- The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Canadian cable television industry announced today that they have formed a unique joint venture to apply to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission to operate a new national programming service to be called the Canadian Parliamentary Channel (CPaC).

The announcement was made by Pierre Juneau, President of the CBC, and Philip Lind, Senior Vice President of Rogers Communications, representing the cable industry.

CPaC would significantly expand the present House of Commons network service for which the CBC holds the licence. In addition to full and more accessible coverage of House of Commons proceedings, CPaC will carry extended coverage of inquiries, hearings, and a variety of other public events of national importance both on and off Parliament Hill.

CPaC's services would be provided in English and French and would be made available via satellite to cable network affiliates representing both linguistic communities across Canada.

"Programming will be of a non-editorial nature, and will give a larger number of Canadians the benefit of greater access to more extensive democratic debate," said Mr. Juneau. "Our partnership reflects a new level of productive cooperation between the public and private elements of the Canadian broadcasting system."





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"The cable industry's objective in this partnership is both to give cable subscribers a wider choice of public interest programming and to support a more active and informed citizenry in Canada," Mr. Lind said. "In that sense it is a natural extension of the industry's commitment to community programming, but on a national level."

In addition to Proceedings of the House of Commons and broadcast of other Parliamentary forums as they become available, CPaC will offer the public opportunities to present their views and interact directly with political representatives; it will offer Canadians major debates of provincial legislatures, as available; and CPaC will cover a variety of speeches, conventions, national political party activities, and other events of national importance from wherever they occur.

CPaC would be established as an independent, non-profit joint venture between the CBC and the cable television industry with both partners making a significant contribution to the service's start-up.

Programming diversity and balance would be ensured by a Programming Committee with equal representation from both partners. If a licence were granted, CPaC could be available to Canadians within six months.

The original CPaC application was filed with the CRTC on September 30, following the CRTC's Notice of July 21, 1988 announcing a short-term renewal for the House of Commons Channel, and its intention to hold a public hearing to consider future licencing of the service. Representatives of the CBC and of the cable industry started discussion in late spring and agreements between the CBC Board of Directors and a group of major cable companies were reached in September.

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